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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
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Summary record of the 30th meeting
Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 12 June 2017, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Bras Gomes

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports (*continued*)

(a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant (*continued*)

Initial report of Pakistan (E/C.12/PAK/1; E/C.12/PAK/Q/1 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Pakistan took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Michael** (Pakistan), introducing his country's initial report (E/C.12/PAK/1), said that Pakistan was a democratic, moderate and progressive State that faced many challenges, but also had immense opportunities. The Government was aware that economic recovery and sustainable economic development were intrinsically linked to the prevailing security situation both inside and outside the country. In order to counter terrorism and extremism, the Government had introduced a number of legal and administrative measures.

3. In May 2017, the current Government had presented its fifth consecutive budget, in which it had allocated 5.1 trillion rupees (PRs) to projects that aimed to bring about inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Sound macroeconomic policies had been drawn up with a view to reducing budget deficits, strengthening the balance of payments, curbing inflationary pressure and reducing the country's dependence on foreign loans and assistance. Gross domestic product (GDP) was expected to grow by 6 per cent in real terms, inflation was expected to fall below 6 per cent, the budget deficit was forecast at 4.1 per cent, and the tax-to-GDP ratio was expected to be 13.7 per cent.

4. The minimum wage for labourers had been increased from PRs 14,000 to PRs 15,000 per month. Tax incentives had been announced with the aim of boosting the agricultural sector, small and medium-sized enterprises and the information technology sector. Initiatives to support farmers included the Kissan (farmers) Package, a crop loan insurance scheme and a livestock insurance scheme. The amount of agricultural credit made available was being increased by 43 per cent in relation to the previous year. To strengthen the housing sector, a risk-sharing scheme would be launched under which the Government would provide a 40 per cent credit guarantee for loans granted by banks and development finance initiatives for the purchasing of homes valued at up to PRs 1 million.

5. The Government had taken measures that had increased per capita income and reduced the number of persons living below the poverty line. Under the Benazir Income Support Programme, families who started their own businesses would receive training and a cash grant of PRs 50,000. Some 250,000 families were expected to benefit. In order to increase the availability of financial services, a fund of PRs 8 billion would be created by the State Bank of Pakistan to provide loans through microfinance banks to individuals with low incomes. To promote the employment of persons with disabilities, the existing 2 per cent quota for government jobs would be extended to cover public and publicly listed companies. A medium-term plan was being developed to transform the economy of Pakistan and address energy shortages in order to bring about sustained economic development.

6. A number of administrative and legislative measures had been taken to ensure the protection of economic, social and cultural rights in the country. The principles of policy set out in chapter 2 of the Constitution were justiciable and articles 25 to 27 of the Constitution prohibited discrimination on any basis. The judicial interpretation of article 25 had led to the development of an extensive body of case law covering a broad range of government activity. In practice, equal protection under the law was ensured by the right of individuals to challenge government actions in the courts and the power of the courts to invalidate acts deemed to be unconstitutional. Article 36 of the Constitution specifically provided for the protection of minorities. The Covenant was also interpreted and applied through various domestic laws, including the Pakistan Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

7. Various measures had been introduced to strengthen the financial and administrative capacity of provincial governments, particularly in the areas of social security, housing, health care and education. Treaty implementation cells had been established in all provinces to oversee and coordinate the implementation of ratified conventions. All provinces had human rights departments which were mandated to deal with complaints. At the district level, human rights committees received complaints and monitored the human rights situation in their districts. Disciplinary committees at the departmental level took action against government officials found guilty of any unlawful action.

8. In February 2016, the Government had launched the National Action Plan on Human Rights, under which existing legislation would be reviewed to ensure that it complied with the international human rights obligations of Pakistan and was not discriminatory in any way. In line with the Plan, the implementation of which would be monitored by a task force comprising federal and provincial authorities, the National Commission for Minorities had been strengthened, the National Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had been set up and the National Commission for the Rights of Children was being established. The National Commission for Human Rights and the National Commission on the Status of Women had been established and made functional by acts of parliament. Both were empowered to take action in cases of rights violations.

9. Over the previous five years, the Government had considerably increased the proportion of the budget allocated to social protection, housing, water, sanitation, health and education at the federal and provincial levels. Since 2010, the education budget had more than doubled. The number of children aged between 5 and 16 who were not enrolled in school had fallen from 25.96 million in 2012/13 to 22.64 million in 2015/16. In 2015, the installation of water, sanitation and hygiene facilities had benefited around 70,400 children, eliminating a major barrier to school enrolment and retention which particularly affected girls.

10. The National Health Vision 2016-2025 aimed to achieve universal health coverage and fairer, more efficient health financing that pooled risk and shared health-care costs equitably across the population. The National Health Programme had been launched to provide universal health coverage, particularly to those living below the poverty line. Around 100 million people would benefit from that initiative. The National Vision action plan focused on reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition, in line with global commitments. Tremendous progress had been achieved in the previous two years under the national Polio Eradication Programme and the National Emergency Action Plan. Only two cases of polio had been reported thus far in 2017, nine fewer than the number reported by 15 May 2016.

11. The first draft of a national food security policy had been drawn up. The Ministry of National Food Security and Research was developing the Zero Hunger Programme in collaboration with the World Food Programme to improve the food security situation in targeted districts of Pakistan. In 2015, a national infant and young child feeding strategy had been developed with support from the United Nations Children's Fund.

12. **Ms. Ravenberg** (Country Rapporteur) said that she welcomed the State party's adoption of the National Commission for Human Rights Act of 2012, anti-honour killings laws and laws prohibiting child labour in some provinces. It was not entirely clear to her, however, how the Covenant rights had been incorporated into the domestic legal order, and she would appreciate clarification in that regard. Although the Constitution of Pakistan recognized a number of human rights, it seemed that those rights were divided into two categories, only one of which was justiciable. The principles of policy set out in chapter 2, for example, appeared simply to be guidelines for the enactment of legislation, not justiciable rights. She would welcome clarification on that point. Information on cases in which the Covenant had been invoked or applied by domestic courts would also be helpful.

13. The devolution process, whereby provincial and territorial governments had been given responsibility for the provision of public services, was welcome, as it enabled such services to be tailored to the needs of local communities. However, the Committee had been informed that a lack of coordination between the federal and local levels often resulted in delays in transferring funding for social services and capacity and infrastructure for

service delivery was weak in some provinces. Could the delegation provide information on the measures taken to address regional disparities in service provision?

14. She would appreciate clarification as to whether the National Commission for Human Rights was mandated to deal with complaints regarding violations of economic, social and cultural rights and whether it had the power to investigate alleged human rights violations by the military or intelligence agencies. It appeared that the Commission was under the supervision of the Ministry of Human Rights. Furthermore, information received by the Committee indicated that the Government had taken the view that the Commission was not mandated to submit independent reports to United Nations treaty bodies, which seemed at odds with the Government's avowed efforts to strengthen the Commission as an independent national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles. A comment from the delegation in regard would be appreciated.

15. She wished to know what measures the State party had taken in response to repeated reports of abduction, killing and intimidation of human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists; how many cases had been investigated and prosecuted; and what penalties had been imposed on perpetrators. She would also like information on measures taken to combat corruption in the public sector, strengthen the investigation of corruption cases and ensure sanctions for those found guilty. Were judicial remedies, internal oversight bodies and confidential complaint mechanisms in place? It would also be useful to receive information on measures to provide a safe environment for individuals wishing to lodge complaints of corruption and to protect complainants, whistle-blowers, witnesses and anticorruption advocates.

16. **Mr. Uprimny** (Country Task Force) said that, while he welcomed the Government's plans to increase the ratio of tax revenue to GDP, he was concerned that additional revenue might be raised through indirect taxes that would adversely affect the poorest segments of the population. How did the Government plan to avoid increasing the tax burden on low-income families? He would also like to know whether consensual same-sex relations would be decriminalized; whether the Government would consider introducing legislation that would promote reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities and deem the denial of such accommodation to be a form of discrimination; whether individuals would be granted general legal protection against discrimination on the basis of caste; and whether the Government intended to introduce legislation banning all the forms of discrimination mentioned in the Covenant.

17. The State party was to be commended for having welcomed a large number of refugees. However, the Committee was concerned to note that, following the 2015 attack on a school in Peshawar, Afghan refugees had been harassed by the general population and the security forces, with the result that thousands of registered refugees and asylum seekers had been forced to return to Afghanistan. In the light of that situation, he wished to know whether the Government was aware that Afghan refugees were suffering abuse, what steps were being taken to prevent such abuse and whether the Government planned to extend the validity of proof-of-registration documents for Afghan refugees beyond the end of 2017. The Committee would welcome further information on the Government's policy for dealing with internally displaced persons and its plans to implement a long-term solution that would protect such persons, particularly women, children and persons with disabilities, against abuse. Lastly, the Committee would like to hear how the Government would ensure that the judiciary remained independent.

18. **Ms. Shin** (Country Task Force), noting that discriminatory laws such as the Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance of 1979 and the Law of Evidence of 1984 had resulted in the imprisonment of thousands of women rape victims, who had been falsely charged with adultery, said that she wished to know whether such laws were considered to be discriminatory under the Constitution and under domestic law. If so, what steps were being taken to eliminate them and the practices associated with them? In view of the fact that three separate justice systems existed in Pakistan, she wondered how conflicts between the three systems were managed, what steps were being taken to consolidate them into a single system applicable to the entire national territory and how women's access to justice was ensured. Were women aware of their rights under the Covenant and were judges aware that, under its provisions, women and men were entitled to equal treatment before the law?

19. **Mr. Dasgupta**, noting that spending on education and health was extremely low in relation to GDP and that the amounts allocated were often not fully used, said that he wished to know what steps were being taken to ensure that the State party complied with its Covenant obligation to devote the maximum available resources to key areas such as health and education. The legislation in force in the areas of inheritance and marriage discriminated against women. Attempts by members of the Sindh Assembly to adopt a bill preventing the forced conversion of non-Muslim women had reportedly been blocked on the advice of the Council of Islamic Ideology, and he would like to hear what steps were being taken to ensure to secure the bill's enactment. The Constitution prohibited discrimination on the basis of religion, but also stipulated that the posts of President and Prime Minister were reserved for Muslims. He would appreciate a comment from the delegation on that apparent contradiction.

20. **Mr. Kerdoun** said that he understood that the Government was considering building a wall along the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan as a deterrent to terrorism; he would like to know whether that was in fact the case. Pakistan had been a leader within the United Nations with regard to diplomatic action to advocate for the right of all peoples to self-determination, but such action had proved unsuccessful in many cases. He would be interested in hearing the delegation's views on other means that might be used to advance the principle of self-determination.

The meeting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 4.15 p.m.

21. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that most of the rights set out in the International Bill of Human Rights had been enshrined in the Constitution. However, some of those rights were justiciable while others, known as principles of policy, were not. Every year, the Government was obliged to submit a report to parliament on the extent to which those principles of policy had influenced policymaking. In practice, the courts generally gave near equal weight to the two sets of rights and ensured that both were enforced. Moreover, when filing petitions, lawyers commonly invoked the provisions of international legal instruments such as the Covenant. In recent years, two additional fundamental rights had been added to the Constitution: the right to freedom of information and the right to education for children aged between 6 and 16.

22. Efforts were being made to establish institutional mechanisms that would facilitate coordination between the federal Government, the federal parliament, the provincial governments, the federal judiciary and the provincial judiciary. Such mechanisms included a ministerial committee established to implement educational reforms and the treaty implementation cells established at the federal and provincial levels. The National Finance Commission was responsible for allocating budgets. Some 67.5 per cent of the taxes raised were allocated to the provincial governments, which were responsible for capacity-building in the areas of education, health care and agriculture, among others. In recent years, provincial governments had established training programmes and administrative institutions and the Ministry of Human Rights had set up institutes for the purpose of training provincial officials.

23. Progressive reforms were being undertaken with a view to merging the Federally Administered Tribal Areas with the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As a result, the jurisdiction of the High Courts of Pakistan and the Supreme Court of Pakistan would be extended to ensure that all domestic legislation applied to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. The Government had decided to allocate PRs 10 billion annually to development in those areas over a period of 10 years with a view to ensuring that they enjoyed a level of development equal to the rest of the country.

24. The Human Rights Commission had not been brought under the control of the Ministry of Human Rights. Although, for legislative and financial reasons, it was necessary for the Commission and other bodies to be attached to a ministry, that connection did not involve any sort of control. In a similar manner, the Supreme Court was attached to the Ministry of Law and Justice but was not controlled by it.

25. While it was true that the level of violence had increased as a result of the war being fought on the western front, strenuous efforts were being made to assist victims of the conflict and to protect those living in the region concerned. As part of those efforts, human

rights defenders were provided with funding for legal assistance. The courts had handed down heavy sentences to some perpetrators of violence against human rights defenders. As a result of the Government's efforts, the level of violence and the number of violent deaths had declined significantly since 2013.

26. The National Accountability Bureau was empowered to tackle corruption in the civil service and among politicians. In the provinces, a number of provincial bodies fulfilled a similar function. In order to raise citizens' awareness of the importance of fighting corruption, the Bureau had carried out campaigns at universities, colleges and other institutions, and the subject of corruption had been included in the school curriculum. A parliamentary committee composed of representatives of both houses and all political parties had been formed with a view to drafting a new law to curb corruption. Pakistan had ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption and parliament had passed a new law that required every business concern in the country to send a global asset register to the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan. A recently introduced public interest disclosures bill would give complete protection against administrative and legal reprisals to individuals who reported cases of corruption. Centres had been established that carried out forensic investigations into white-collar crime and a new federal law had been drafted that would grant protection to witnesses by enabling them to appear in court without disclosing their identities.

27. With regard to the question of maximum available resources, tax revenues in Pakistan had increased by 62 per cent and the funds allocated to development had increased three-fold over the previous three years. Responsibility for responding to requests for tax exemption now lay with the Economic Coordination Committee, which had considered only five or six such requests in the previous four years. Tax exemptions were very difficult to obtain and were usually granted only in relation to transactions between government bodies.

28. The laws of Pakistan were based on Muslim jurisprudence and common law. Under the former, homosexuality was an offence. The delegation could make no commitments in relation to homosexuality, as it was a very sensitive issue and it would be very difficult for any government to change legislation in that area.

29. Scheduled castes were not an issue in Pakistan, as they were not mentioned in the Constitution. However, there were a number of minority groups in the country, notably Hindus in Sindh Province. A law governing marriage and divorce for Hindus had been developed in consultation with representatives from that community, and another was currently being drawn up to cover the Christian population of Pakistan. While extremist views did exist in some communities, relations between the Muslim and Hindu communities were generally peaceful. Minorities were well protected under national laws, as demonstrated by the presence of Hindu representatives in the National Assembly. The Prime Minister himself showed solidarity with them by attending Hindu festivals.

30. The trichotomy of powers, which included an independent judiciary, was enshrined in the Constitution. The Government respected the judiciary as the guardians of fundamental rights and did not attempt to reverse judgments that went against it. Judicial independence was one of the basic principles in the Constitution that could not be altered, even by parliament. The courts were allocated their own budget and had full control over judicial appointments.

31. Rape had been made a criminal offence several years previously and was governed by the Penal Code rather than Muslim jurisprudence, as had been the case in the past. Changes to all legislation concerning rape and sexual offences had made investigation by the police and the provision of medical and legal assistance to victims mandatory. The loopholes that had existed in legislation governing so-called honour killings had been addressed and life imprisonment had been made mandatory for related crimes.

32. **Ms. Agha** (Pakistan) said that the National Commission for Human Rights was an independent statutory body that had full financial autonomy, in line with the Paris Principles. The Ministry of Human Rights forwarded all complaints related to human rights issues to the Commission for redress; 350 complaints, many of them concerning government departments and officials, had been forwarded in 2017 alone. A large number

of the 635 complaints received since December 2015 were being addressed through hearings, investigations and *suo moto* action by the Supreme Court for the enforcement of fundamental rights conferred by chapter I of the Constitution. The Commission had the right to contact any citizen and visit any institution in the country. Its annual budget had recently increased by 150 per cent. In cases concerning the Armed Forces, the Commission could request a report from the Government and make a recommendation on that basis, to which the Government was required to respond within three months. The legislation establishing the Commission provided that it was free of any political bias or interference. The Ministry had a national action plan to ensure that account was taken of human rights in all government activities. At local level, district human rights committees provided free legal assistance and guidance.

33. **Ms. Malik** (Pakistan) said that the National Commission on the Status of Women had worked in close partnership with the National Police Bureau to achieve a rise in the numbers of female police officers, who were trained in dealing with issues that affected women. The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act had been passed and telephone helplines and crisis centres were now available to help women who had been abused. The Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance had been repealed, and a new rape bill excluded any consideration of the previous experience of the woman concerned. Bills on issues related to transgender persons and women with disabilities were being drafted.

34. **Mr. Amil** (Pakistan) said that refugees were an integral part of his country's history. The most recent wave of refugees, from Afghanistan, had brought up to 5 million persons into the country at certain times. Pakistan was currently host to 1.2 million Afghan refugees and had never forcibly repatriated any of them, as shown by the outcome of the Tripartite Commission Meeting between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in July 2016. Any long-term solution to the refugee situation was contingent on peace and coexistence, which in turn depended on an improvement in the economic situation. Accordingly, Pakistan had provided a package of US$ 500 million in bilateral assistance to Afghanistan for infrastructure, education and health projects, and had then offered a similar sum for other areas of development. The Government recognized the importance of international borders and the right to self-determination and would support peaceful negotiated settlements.

35. In economic terms, Pakistan was on the right track towards development. Recent World Bank figures showed growth of 5.2 per cent in the economy, which had beneficial effects on the whole of society and had helped to restore macroeconomic progress and reduce the vulnerability of the country's citizens. The Karachi stock exchange was the top-performing exchange in the Asian region and Pakistan now qualified as an emerging market according to the Morgan Stanley Capital International index.

36. While education represented only 2 per cent of government spending at national level, it should be remembered that the provincial governments put a substantial part of their budgets into education — 28 per cent in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa Province, for example. Furthermore, nearly 40 per cent of children in Pakistan went to private schools. In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Baluchistan, a fee reimbursement scheme had benefited over 17,000 students from less developed areas and nearly 4,000 young people had gone into higher education. Funding was also available to provide skills training for young people and business development in those areas.

37. **Mr. Sadi** (Country Task Force) said that he would like to know how madrasas were being encouraged to promote human rights, rather than extremism. He would also like information on any case law related to the country's human rights institutions at any level.

38. **Ms. Shin**, welcoming the news that the Offence of Zina (Enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance had been repealed, said that she would like details of the Penal Code provisions on rape. She would also like to know whether there were any plans to revise the requirements for proof of adultery. The Committee would appreciate information on the number and percentage of women police officers at local level and details of how a woman who suffered rape in a remote area might have access to justice.

39. **Mr. Windfuhr** asked whether the national human rights institution planned to apply for A status.

40. **Mr. Uprimny** said that he wished to know whether the State party intended to move away from indirect taxes, which placed an excessive burden on low-income families, to a system of more progressive taxation. He would like to know what was being done to combat indirect discrimination against persons belonging to scheduled castes. Lastly, was the Government aware of the reported abuses committed against Afghan refugees by public officials and were proof-of-registration cards for refugees to expire, as reported, at the end of 2017?

41. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim**, recalling that, on signing the Covenant, the State party had made a declaration that the Covenant provisions would be applied subject to the provisions of its national legislation and had later replaced that declaration with another that made application of the Covenant subject to the provisions of the Constitution, asked why the change had been made and how the outcome of the second declaration differed from that of the first.

42. **Mr. Dasgupta**, welcoming the change in evidence requirements in rape cases, said that he would like to know whether there were any plans to reform the practice of sharia courts that accorded evidence given by women only half the value of that given by men. He also wished to know whether steps were being taken to address other forms of discrimination against women in the areas of inheritance and marriage. The Committee would welcome comments on reports that the Council of Islamic Ideology had blocked attempts by the Sindh Province legislature to enact a bill to prevent the forced conversion of non-Muslim women. He welcomed the new legislation governing so-called honour killings and would appreciate information on how many cases had been brought and convictions handed down under it.

43. **Ms. Ravenberg** said that she would like to know whether the State party was intending to broaden its legal definition of "minority" to include aspects such as race, language or ethnicity in addition to religion. She asked whether the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act 2015 and the policy for the regulation of international NGOs in Pakistan had been adopted. She was concerned that they placed serious restrictions on the operations of international NGOs and local NGOs that received funding from abroad, rather than supporting their work for the benefit of local communities. She would appreciate information on the number of international NGOs that had applied for recognition and the outcome of their applications, with the grounds for any rejections. It seemed that the Government had recently tasked the Ministry of Human Rights with monitoring human rights NGOs; would the delegation comment on whether that decision might have a harmful effect on the work of the groups concerned?

44. **Ms. Shin** said that she would like to see detailed data on unemployment. She would also like to know when the current census would be finalized and analysed and whether the State party intended to conduct annual stratified sampling in the years until the next census. Mention had been made of employment quotas for women, persons with disabilities and members of minorities; were they implemented in practice? On labour rights, the Committee would appreciate specific information on the number of workers covered by the many different laws applicable in the different provinces.

45. The minimum wage was very low and varied between provinces. She would like to know whether it could guarantee a decent standard of living and, if not, whether the Government was considering raising it. Workplace accidents were unfortunately a common occurrence, and she would like to hear what the authorities were doing to prevent both accidents and illness in the workplace and how workers in the informal economy, especially women in agriculture and domestic employment, were protected. Given that women frequently did not receive equal pay for doing the same work as men, it would be interesting to know whether the concept of equal pay for work of equal value was understood by employers and government officials. She would also like to hear what the Government was doing to enforce the International Labour Organization (ILO) standards on child labour and to prohibit the use of bonded labour. Labour inspections were another

area of concern, as reports indicated that, even in the formal sector, there was only one inspector for every 25,000 workers.

46. The State party's legislation imposed many restrictions on the formation and functioning of trade unions, including prohibitions on the formation of unions for a particular industry or occupation and of federations of trade unions. Furthermore, a union that represented less than one third of the total number of employees in an enterprise was not allowed to participate in collective bargaining. She would appreciate the delegation's comments on that situation and would like to see data on trade union membership and the information available to workers to make them aware of their right to join a union. It would also be useful to know how many workers were covered by social insurance schemes and whether the payments provided by such schemes were adequate.

47. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that bonded labour had been abolished in 1992 and the relevant legislation had been introduced at all levels. Bonded labour had been a particular problem in Punjab and Sindh Provinces, and programmes to address it had been introduced with the help of the labour unions. The agriculture sector, where the problem tended to take the form of slavery-like practices, was governed by separate laws. All public officials now received training on preventing such practices and the courts were very active in combating the phenomenon. Discussions had been held with ILO and the unions with a view to developing a contract agreement for workers in the carpet and brick industries, but no consensus had yet been reached.

48. **Ms. Riffat** (Pakistan) said that Pakistan had signed the fundamental ILO conventions, and the freedom of association was enshrined in its Constitution, as was the promotion of the social and economic well-being of the people. Under the Federal Industrial Relations Act 2012, both public and private sector workers had the right to form trade unions, and labour legislation, at both provincial and national level, was also applicable to the informal sector. The Industrial Relations Act adopted in Sindh Province had allowed agricultural and fisheries workers to form and join trade unions, and the other provinces were taking similar action. Legislation dating from 1995 restricted employees in the banking sector from joining unions, but meetings had been held recently with the social partners on the drafting of a code of conduct that would remove that restriction.

49. In the area of occupational safety and health, the Government fully recognized the importance of labour protection and was currently developing a national framework for that purpose. Pakistan had signed the ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81) and enacted national implementing legislation. The provinces were being encouraged to do the same and to ensure that they had adequate capacity for inspection. The Federal Consultative Tripartite Committee met each quarter to discuss labour rights, workers' welfare and related issues. Subsequent to a number of serious workplace accidents, the Baluchistan provincial government, with technical assistance from ILO, was taking steps to ensure that occupational safety and health legislation was enacted and that effective implementation mechanisms were put in place. The labour inspectorate now included female inspectors and had a dedicated training institution.

50. **Mr. Khan** (Pakistan) said that the Government recognized the need to simplify and consolidate the country's laws and had already embarked on that process with the help of ILO consultants. There had been an attempt to introduce a law to protect the rights of domestic workers, but it had not come to fruition. However, a related policy was being developed. The contribution of family members, especially women, to the economy was not always taken into account, but the Ministry of Finance was working to address that issue. Work was also ongoing on the minimum wage, which had been implemented throughout the public sector and was being extended to the private sector.

51. **Mr. Amil** (Pakistan) said that unemployment currently stood at less than 6 per cent. The outcome of the current census would improve the Government's ability to monitor such figures. The census, the results of which were currently being finalized, had been conducted in nine languages and, for the first time, had included a third gender among the options offered.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.